

## Is PREPA Bringing a Stale Baloney Sandwich to a Gourmet Buffet?

During periods of major disruption: confusion and chaos often obscure reality, vision, cause & effect, and clarity of thought. With Hurricane Maria, bankruptcy, global warming, governmental disintegration, and the pandemic – just to name a few – it's not surprising that Puerto Rico has also been suffering from encumbered decision making from antiquated leadership.

With the FEMA promise of billions of dollars to reconstruct all aspects of the generation, transmission, and distribution system, one would think those concerned about the future economic viability of our island would want to create a contemporary grid and an efficient, cost effective, state of the art generation system. Renewables are not only part of our short to long-term mandates (40% of our electricity from renewable resources by 2025, 60% by 2040, and 100% by 2050), but they make tremendous economic sense in many locations. In Puerto Rico, wind and solar are very reliable, cheaper in the short run, and much, much, more economical in the long run.

Despite claims by the oil and gas industry to the contrary, Caribbean based systems can be sized with arrays and battery banks that can handle any typical scenario of low wind and/or clouds. And they can be widely distributed for efficiency and resiliency. Existing gas and oil systems can be kept for backup in the short run, but spending good money on adding new fossil fuel systems is attaching our lifeline to a boat anchor. In a very few years, these assets will be absolutely obsolete, and the money paid for them (that could have gone into renewables) will be lost forever. See this well-regarded study by the Rocky Mountain Institute: <https://rmi.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/clean-energy-portfolio-two-pager.pdf>

Climate change and socially responsible investment (SRI) strategies are the public pronouncements of the investment and finance industries, but the real reason that we see big oil **tanking** is the realization that the oil industry is in rapid decline due to the hands-down ascension of the solar/wind/battery power paradigm. Non-renewable assets will soon be stranded, and investment write-downs inevitable.

This generous buffet of billions is paid for by FEMA, do we really want to squander it on a stale baloney sandwich-based future?